



MESSAGE FROM THE SUMMIT SENATE CHAIR:

Thank you for your interest in the Business and Professional Women's Leadership Summit that was held May 16-17, 2005 in Washington, D.C. With the dedication of so many talented individuals like you, women can continue to take an active role in shaping policy and creating lasting positive change for our country.

Due to the participation of many outstanding leaders, the Summit advanced a constructive dialogue for attendees from 41 states and the District of Columbia. We were honored that U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings joined us for keynote remarks and Q & A with the audience. Other inspiring speakers included U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton.



U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (right) with Harriet Miers, Counsel to the U.S. President (center), and Susie Hitchcock-Hall, Susie's South 40 Confections



Keynote speaker U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings



U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton

Additional speakers participating in interactive sessions included U.S. Senators Mitch McConnell, Susan Collins, and Lisa Murkowski, as well as Ambassador Nancy Brinker, Dr. Antonia Novella, and Harriet Miers, Counsel to U.S. President George W. Bush. For additional photographs from the Summit, please visit www.hutchison.senate.gov where you may download pictures.

We heard your comments at the Summit, and the evaluation forms that approximately 200 of you completed will help us improve our future efforts. The following pages provide updates on several items resulting from your suggestions. On page 2, we listed your top legislative priorities with a status report. On page 3, we included some of your ideas from the completed Summit evaluations.

The U.S. Senate recently made progress on several issues, including the confirmation of judicial nominees who previously were blocked, to fill federal court vacancies. Justice Priscilla Owen was confirmed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit on May 25, 2005. Janice Rogers Brown was confirmed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on June 8, 2005.

Thank you again for your feedback and for the opportunity to work together. I will inform you about future events, and I wish you continued success in the future.

Sincerely,

Kay Bailey Hutchison
U.S. Senator
Summit Chair

PRIORITY ISSUES FOR THE U.S. CONGRESS

HEALTH CARE ACCESS/AFFORDABILITY

- **Medical Liability Reform** – Doctors and other health care providers are leaving their professions due to high insurance premiums that have been driven up due to outsized jury awards in some medical malpractice cases. Congress is reviewing commonsense steps to protect the rights of all malpractice victims while preserving Americans' access to quality health care.
- **Association Health Plans (AHPs)** – *The Small Business Health Fairness Act* has been introduced in the House (H.R. 525) and Senate (S. 406) to allow small businesses to band together and negotiate on behalf of their employees and their families to obtain better health insurance at an affordable price.
- **Prescription Drug Benefits** – The 2003 Medicare modernization and improvement law created a voluntary prescription drug benefit that begins January 2006. Seniors will be eligible to enroll starting this November so they have more choices and receive the affordable modern health care they deserve.



U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Kay Bailey Hutchison with Suzanne Haynes, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health



Kati Haycock, Director, The Education Trust

EDUCATION

- **Education Funding** – President Bush's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2006 provides \$56 billion in discretionary funding for education, including increases for the *No Child Left Behind Act*, special education grants to states, and the Pell Grant program. Since taking office, President Bush has increased education funding by \$13.8 billion, or 33 percent. Review the budget request for your state at www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/index.html.
- **Financial Literacy** – The *No Child Left Behind Act*, (Title V, Section 5131 (a) (11)) provides for innovative assistance programs so schools can use funds to teach personal financial management skills, including the basic principles involved with earning, spending, saving, and investing.
- **Head Start Improvements** – On May 25, 2005, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee unanimously approved S. 1107, the *Head Start Improvements for School Readiness Act*, to reauthorize and improve accountability, quality, and funding for the preschool program. The bill is ready for consideration by the full Senate.

ECONOMIC GROWTH/JOB CREATION

- **Highway Reauthorization** – On May 17, 2005, the Senate passed a highway bill to improve U.S. roads, strengthen transportation infrastructure, and create jobs. A conference committee is working to resolve differences between the House and Senate bills.
- **Energy Security** – On June 14, 2005, the Senate began debating comprehensive energy legislation to increase domestic production and exploration, modernize the U.S. electricity grid, promote a cleaner environment, and create American jobs.
- **Free Trade** – President Bush recently called on Congress to ratify the U.S.-Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). For American farmers, businesses, and workers, CAFTA would cut foreign taxes for U.S. products and open up a market of 44 million consumers.
- **Social Security** – Economists calculate that if Congress takes no steps to reform Social Security, the government will have to increase payroll taxes to more than 18 percent of a worker's wages to ensure our children and grandchildren receive their scheduled benefits. President Bush has proposed a plan to address the funding problems facing Social Security and is committed to working with Congress to achieve permanent solvency to protect job growth and the economy.



Lurita Doan, President, New Technology Management, Inc.

POLICY SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to those attendees who completed the Summit evaluation and the policy questionnaire. Your feedback is an invaluable tool in helping us further refine the agenda and priorities for future Summits.

Based on attendees' completed questionnaires, the top four issues of importance to you are:

1. Health Care
2. Education
3. Economy and Job Creation
4. Defense/War on Terror



Front Row: Felicia Smith and Yvonne Keaton-Martin, Fort Smith Public Schools. Back Row: Mili Lopez, Good Samaritan Clinic, LaVonda Hartgraves, Fort Smith Public Schools, Beverly Gonzales, The Oasis Life Skills Center, Inc., Denise W. Streeter, JC Penney Afterschool

Some of your suggestions for addressing these issues were:

- *Need to allow medical profession, not insurance companies, to determine health care for individuals.*
- *Fund more educational awareness programs like Upward Bound and maintain Even Start and Community Development block grant funding.*
- *Encourage entrepreneurship with support and tax breaks/incentives. Less corporate welfare; level the playing field.*
- *Don't wait until it's politically appropriate to tackle Social Security reform because it never will be. Go ahead and address these issues now before the system is bankrupt.*
- *We need to continue to support military wage increases in order to keep qualified personnel in defense and to be able to attract competitively to the military services.*



Maine attendees: Front Row: Sandy Bastille, Bastille Woodworking & Boat Works, Cathy Goodwin, Greater York Region Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Sen. Susan Collins, Katherine Anderson, Professional Home Nursing, Denise LaRoche, Sam Buca's Bistro, Jen Brooks, Penquis Community Action Program, U.S. Sen. Olympia Snowe. Back Row: Suzanne Goucher, Maine Association of Broadcasters, Sarah Burns, Central Maine Power Company, Judy Tarr, Miles Health Care



Delores Larsen, ROSE Advocated, Inc., Kathy Martin of Lewis-Clark State College, U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, Leanne Rousseau of Dirne Community Health Center, and Idaho State Sen. Joyce Broadsworth



U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum with Starletta Hairston, Beaufort, South Carolina County Council